

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 4-8, 10-12, 14, 16-18, 32-33, 35-41, 43-45, 47-48, 50, 61, and 63 are currently pending, with previously pending claims 19-31, 51-60, and 64-65 having been withdrawn. Claims 3, 9, 13, 15, 34, 42, 46, 49, and 62 were previously canceled. The Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 4-5, 8, 16-18, 32-33, 35, 39-41, 48, 50, 61, and 63 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alcorn et al. (US 2004/0153509) and Roschelle et al. (US 6,628,918), referred to as Alcorn and Roschelle hereafter, respectively. Claims 6-7, 10-12, 14, 37-38, 43-45, and 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alcorn in view of Roschelle and further in view of Bell et al (US 2004/0126745), referred to hereafter as Bell.

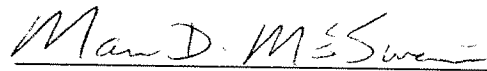
Applicants amend claims 1-2, 4-7, 32-33, 35-41, and 61 in this response to more clearly define the invention. Claims 8, 10-12, 14, 16-18, 43-45, 47-48, 50, and 63 are canceled in this response. Applicants note that Alcorn is capable of automatic grading functionality only for inputs corresponding to multiple choice, true/false, matching, or essay question answers. See paragraph 223 of Alcorn. Neither Roschelle nor Bell cure this defect. The cited prior art does not address the situation where correct answers and student responses are equations or mathematical expressions to be compared automatically, as in the present invention. As neither Alcorn nor the remaining prior art references teach or suggest each and every limitation of the independent claims, as amended, those claims are not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Accordingly, the rejection of the independent claims, as well as the rejection of the remaining claims which depend therefrom, should be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds for rejection have been accommodated or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. There being no other rejections, Applicants respectfully request that the current application be allowed and passed to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 13-0019, excluding issue fee payment.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Marc D. McSwain", written over a horizontal line.

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